

MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

Fibrous Bladderwort (*Utricularia fibrosa* Walt.)

Description

Fibrous Bladderwort is a delicate aquatic herb, with stems creeping on the bottom in shallow water, radiating from the base of the scape; the scapes are 1-4 dm. high and 2-7 flowered. The leaves are thrice-forked and rather crowded on the submersed branches. Some, but not all, of these branches also produce tiny bladders among the leaves, which actually trap and digest micro animals to augment the plant's nutrient and mineral supply. The flower is yellow, made up of an upper and lower lip and reminiscent of a snapdragon. The spur is slender and it equals the lower lip in length- 8-10 mm. The flowering season is late July-September.

Habitat

This species favors shallow freshwater ponds, pools, and wet peaty sand in pine barrens. It appears only during drought years when water levels are very low.

Range

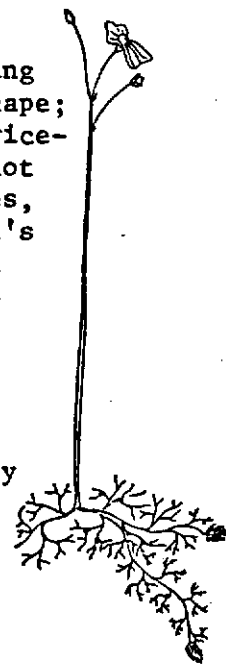
This Bladderwort is distributed on the coastal plain from Southeastern Massachusetts, south to Florida and Mississippi.

Population Status

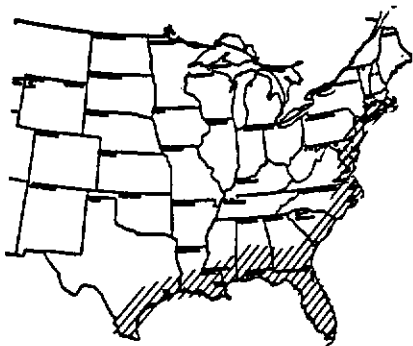
Fibrous Bladderwort is considered endangered in Massachusetts. There are two current occurrences that have been verified on Cape Cod and a few additional occurrences reported prior to that time.

Similar Species

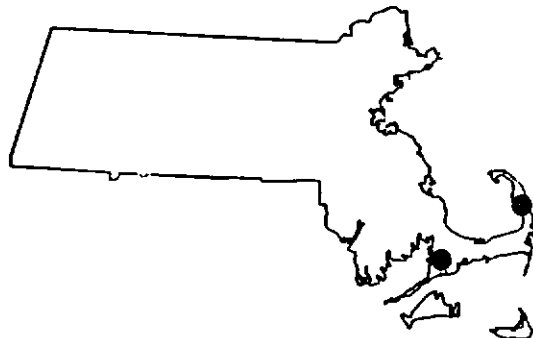
Utricularia biflora, another rare species in Massachusetts, is very similar to *U. fibrosa*, but is smaller in all dimensions. *U. biflora*'s spur is almost always longer than the lower lip. All branches of *U. biflora* produce bladders.



Cleason, W.A. The New Britton and Brown
Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S.
and Adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden,
1957.



Distribution of Fibrous Bladderwort



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town